

TROWSE WITH NEWTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting, held on 19th February 2024 in The Manor Rooms, Trowse at 7.15pm.

PRESENT

Cllr Bowers, Cllr Price, Cllr King, Cllr P. Greenizan, Cllr Haynes, Cllr Owen, Cllr A. Greenizan, Cllr Long and Kate Leggett (Clerk)

086 (001) APOLOGIES

Cllr Barnes.

087 (002) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

Cllrs on the Manor Rooms Management Committee, those with allotments, those on the Trowse Historical Society committee and those who are Trowse Primary Governors.

088 (003) MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on the 18th December 2023 were **AGREED and signed with an amendment to the attendees. Cllr Haynes was recorded as both present and absent. He was absent and Cllr King was present.**

089 (004) PUBLIC FORUM

a) In the absence of District/County councillors the Clerk read out reports.

District reports – at the end of these minutes - report added to website.

County report – at the end of these minutes – report added to website.

b) Public

None for this meeting.

090 (005) MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES (UPDATE FROM THE CLERK)

Decisions/Actions	Delegated to
Letter to Highways re parking scheme proposals	Clerk and Cllr Bowers
Investigation into direct contact for Highways	Clerk.

091 (006) COMMITTEE UPDATES

6.1 Personnel and Communications

In the absence of Cllr Barnes, Cllrs Bowers and Long gave an update.

- Cllr Bowers has produced a process for our Newsletter deliver volunteers. It is hoped that the more streamlined system makes delivery easier and less time consuming for both organisers and volunteers.

6.2 Finance

Cllr Haynes took those present through the most recent Finance Committee meeting.

Sign

Date

- a) To approve and appoint the internal auditor for 23/24 financial year. This was a recommendation from the Finance Committee. **Resolved to appoint Sonya Blythe, all in favour. Clerk to action.**
- The Santander account has now been closed and the funds transferred to Unity.
 - There is a new system in place for monitoring Ear Marked Reserves and CIL spends.
 - New saving accounts will be opened to enable better returns on Council funds.

6.3 Open Spaces

Cllr Owen gave a rundown of discussions held at the most recent Open Spaces meeting.

- The village sign is almost complete. It is hoped that it will be back in situ by the end of the month.
- A litter pick has been organised for the 1st April as part of the Clean Up and Bloom initiative from SNDC.
- Cllrs Haynes and Long took members through the plans for the village sports day on the 27th July.
- The newly formed working group for the Biodiversity Action Plan has identified the first project they wish to organise, which is the Cemetery on Whitlingham Lane. There will be some planting of shrubs and wildflowers after some of the more intrusive green alkanet has been removed. The first session at the cemetery will be on the 24th Feb.

092 (007) MANOR ROOMS

The chair of the Manor Rooms gave an update.

- The Manor Rooms Management Committee are continuing to work with the PC with regards to the Parish office.
- Hire rates are being considered given the increase cost of utilities.
- The MR is still attracting new hirers and people are urged to use facilities on their doorstep rather than look for venues elsewhere.
- The MR Management Committee are looking to make significant investments in the building, such as a new heating system, windows and insulation.
- They are exploring new fund raising ideas and Crowd Funding possibilities.

093 (008) FINANCIAL MATTERS

9.1- To agree Payments for January 2024 as circulated. **AGREED AND APPROVED.**

9.2 – To agree bank Reconciliations for January 2024 as circulated. **AGREED AND APPROVED.**

094 (009) PLANNING

Applications:

9.1 Applications:

BA/2024/0007/COND: Whitlingham Broad Camp Site, Whitlingham Lane, Trowse - Replacement of 3 no. bell tents with mezzanine pods and erection of shelter for waste disposal point - variation of conditions 1, 4 and 7 of planning permission BA/2020/0469/COND. **Resolved to Support.**

2024/0010: 11 The Watermill, Bracondale Millgate, Trowse - To install solar panels onto an existing roof top. **No Objections.**

9.2 Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk gave an update on the progress with the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan is going through the Reg 16 consultation stage with SNDC, which should lead onto a referendum later in the year for the adoption of the plan. The Clerk reminded councillors that once the plan is an adopted policy, it will have to be taken into consideration when making decisions.

095 (011) POLICIES

None for this meeting.

096 (012) DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Sign

Date

Next meeting is **Monday 18th March 2024** at 7.15pm.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Decisions/Actions	Delegated to
Appointment of Internal Auditor	Clerk

District and County Reports

District

Lisa Neal - District Councillor Report – January 2024

Nutrient Neutrality:



Finally Norfolk Environmental Credits is up and running and has sold its first credits to Developers!

A Member Committee will be set up with a representative from each Council who are part of the Company to ensure the distribution of credits is shared fairly across all affected Districts.

I will be the SNC representative on this Committee.

Land charges/searches:

Last week I spent an hour with the Team Leader of the department that deals with land charges and searches. The reason I mention this is because it's one of the departments of the Council that tends to be forgotten, myself included, and it just shows the varied things that we deal with. Not just collecting the bins

Dentistry:



2024-01-24 -
Councillor briefing on

I attended a Councillor briefing on dentistry presented to us by the NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB.

I have attached the slides from the presentation above, and there is a link below for a survey that you can complete.

This closes on the 21st February.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/dental-priorities-survey>

Newsletter:



January Project
Update.pdf

Sign

Date

Attached is the latest project update on the Norwich to Tilbury scheme.

Norfolk Community Safety Partnership (NCSP) Monthly Newsletter:



February edition of
the Norfolk Communi

Town and Parish Council Forum:



4. World Cafes for

Health and WellbeingUpdate_Stuart Guthrie



3. Elections



2. Local Plan



5. Wortwell

Project_Lua Leggett.pptx

We held our last Forum on the 6th February.

I have attached the slides and below is a brief outline of what was covered.

- Helen Mellors, Assistant Director in Planning presented on **Local Plan Update** (Att. #2).
- Stuart Guthrie, Electoral Services Manager, introduced himself as new to the role as from November 2023. Stuart talked through his **Elections Update** presentation (Att. #3), emphasising important dates and new guidance on postal votes; coming into effect 2026.
- Ellen Faure, Project Delivery Officer, talked about **World Cafés for Health and Wellbeing** (Att. #4) and the two upcoming events in Diss and Reepham already scheduled. Ellen reported that there is currently not a lot of Parish Council involvement, but welcomed their participation and advertising to residents. The anticipated scope of discussion was raised. It was recognised that the World Café will be a good environment to discuss issues the communities can influence and lead on that are causal i.e. isolation, low-level mental well-being issues, healthy eating, activity... Trevor stated that there are other forums working on systemic issues.
- Andy Sexton gave a brief update around **Pride In Place Grants** and confirmed applications are now closed. We had 40% of Town & Parish councils applying for Clean Up & Bloom grants and he welcomed updates on plans, reports and pictures. Applications for a Pride in Place Community Grant are being reviewed in February/March. Communications about decisions are planned for mid-March.
- Andy invited two Pride in Place recipients to share their projects:

William Mills from **Horstead Centre Partnership** talked about how the Grant fund has helped the Centre reach out to the local community in partnership with the Parish Council. The Centre runs events and learning opportunities for students, with around 3,500 visitors of primary school age per year. The Grant will allow the Centre to run four 'free to attend' days in a year. So far, one event was held in late October 2023 which had around 70 people from local areas attending throughout the day. Activities included such subjects as bat conservation, canoeing, arts and crafts both inside and outside in the garden. The next free community day is during the Easter break.

Lua Leggett from **Wortwell** Community Centre talked through the feasibility study paid for by the Grant and the **Project's** hopes for the future (Att. #5).

Sign

Date

The next Forum is scheduled for **Thursday 7th March, 11am – 12pm.**

Cabinet Meeting:

We had a cabinet meeting last Monday which mainly covered our budget which was agreed by Cabinet it will now go to Scrutiny before a full Council meeting.

One of the major pressures on our budget is the cost of providing a weekly food waste collection, which we have been instructed will have to be provided in April 2026 from all properties in the District.

Although this is two years away, we know that our current waste depot will not be big enough, and we will have to purchase new separate waste trucks from our current ones.

It's estimated this could cost us up to £10M.

Therefore we are already having to plan for this.

Even so I'm proud that we are proposing a balanced budget and a capital programme of just over £97M to support service delivery and to contribute to the Council's financial sustainability over the next 5 years.

Helen Mellors:

Helen is the Assistant Director of Planning for both South Norfolk and Broadland Council, she has worked for South Norfolk Council for over 20 years, some of you may have worked with Helen at some point, she is retiring next month and her replacement is a gentleman called Ben Burgess.

May Gurney site:

Regarding the trees that were cut down last year on the May Gurney site. The Environment Agency and Forestry Commission have been investigating this and the Forestry Commission will be issuing a Re-stocking Notice imminently.

I will let Kate know when this has happened.

District Councillor's Report : Nicola Fowler – February 24

In my recent absence due to work commitments, my colleagues in the Labour Group of South Norfolk Councillors have been very busy and I would like to update you on what the Labour Group has been up to as an effective opposition.

Budget

Members of the Labour Group have met with senior officers of the Council to understand fully how the Budget process works. They have scrutinised the proposed Revenue and Capital Budgets in detail and made representations for amendments and additions. They are pleased to have had accepted some changes to the Budget to support residents in South Norfolk who are struggling financially and support departments within the Council to work more effectively.

The Budget has been reviewed by the Audit Committee, the Cabinet and the Scrutiny committee and it will be presented to the Members at a Council meeting on Wednesday 21st for agreement.

Scrutiny

After the election in May last year, the committee structure at the Council had to change to reflect the balance of the political parties now being represented. My colleague, the Councillor for Loddon and Chedgrave Jeremy Rowe, was elected Chair of the Scrutiny committee.

He is undertaking an overhaul of the committee so it is fully functional in the role intended for it of monitoring the effectiveness of policies and decisions that have been implemented. Providing constructive challenge to achieve better outcomes for residents.

Sign

Date

As part of this, the Chair is encouraging Members to become more engaged with the process and is working with the administration as well to further understand how the Council works, if it is giving its best service and how it uses its resources.

Current subjects up for review include the Revenue and Capital Budgets, the Help Hub service and the move to the Horizon Building.

As part of this he would like to let Parish Councils know that they can make representations for decisions to be reviewed. At first this will need to be via an elected Council Member, but the Council is reviewing the rules to see if Parish Councils can make direct requests themselves.

County Councillor Report - Vic Thomson

et and weather still headlines

range of financial pressures currently faced, especially the rising demand for children's and adults' social care, which they say are contributing to unmanageable bills. It also highlights the costs involved in the delivery of services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and home-to-school transport.

Increasing levels of homelessness which have require us to spend more on fulfilling our responsibilities to those requiring support.

Pharmacy First launched

Patients in England will now be able to get treatment for seven common conditions at high street pharmacies without needing to see a GP, part of a major transformation in the way the NHS delivers care.

Registered pharmacists will be able to assess and treat patients for sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bite, impetigo, shingles, uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women (under the age of 65) without the need for a GP appointment or prescription.

The NHS said that 90% of community chemists have registered to provide the new service and it will free up around 10 million GP appointments a year.

Patients can access the new service by walking straight into a chemist or being referred by NHS 111, urgent treatment centres, accident and emergency departments or their GP. Those who are not registered with a GP can still access the service.

The scheme is part of the NHS and government's primary care access recovery plan.

There will be a national marketing campaign from mid-February 2024, which will encourage the public to access advice and treatment from community pharmacy services for common conditions.

Families in Norfolk will benefit from a new practical service launched by Norfolk County Council and Home-Start Norfolk.

Norfolk County Council has awarded a one-year contract, starting in April 2024, to deliver a new volunteer peer support service to Home-Start Norfolk, as part of its innovative family hub programme.

The service will be accessible for families in Norfolk who are expecting a baby, or have a child up to the age of two-years-old, who require practical support to make sure they have the tools and resources they need to give their children the best start in life.

County Councillor Penny Carpenter, cabinet member for Children's Services, said: "We are delighted to join forces with Home-Start Norfolk.

Together, we will work tirelessly to ensure that every family in Norfolk has access to the support they need when they need it. This strategic partnership aims to bolster the council's efforts in providing comprehensive support to families across Norfolk, ensuring every child gets the best start in life."

Home-Start has provided emotional and practical support to Norfolk families over the last thirty-five years through a volunteer peer support model. Our volunteer team was recognised late last year with the Kings Award for Voluntary Service, so it has been a very successful few months for the charity.

We look forward to working with the Start for Life team to broaden our offer to families with children aged 0 to 2, as we know these critical days are so crucial to children's early development and emotional wellbeing."

Sign

Date

families need a little extra support during pregnancy and in the early years of their child's development, including practical support as well as understanding which crib or cot to purchase within their budget. Peer support volunteers can help families feel less isolated and develop networks in their local communities. Many families have shared that they value the support from family, friends, and others with similar lived experiences, often above, and in addition, to support from professionals.

In recognition of the needs of families, Home-Start Norfolk will recruit, train and support volunteers to connect and build relationships with individual families in the comfort of their own homes or local community venues. The service will also include community-based groups and activities, supporting individuals to access wider social activities within their local area and accessing guided self-help resources.

The support will empower parents to have capacity and confidence to ensure their child's needs are met, including help to discover and access their local community, access professional support and support identified needs.

The peer support offer is being delivered as part of Norfolk's Start for Life and Family Hub approach, which is funded through the National Government Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme.

The Start for Life and Family Hubs approach supports Norfolk's vision for every child and young person to flourish by strengthening the prevention and early help offer for families with children up to age of 19, or 25 if they have special educational needs and disabilities.

Have your say on Norfolk savings proposals

Norfolk County Council is seeking views on a number of savings proposals within the council's Community and Environmental Services department.

The proposals are part of £41.5m of savings that Norfolk County Council needs to make to balance its budget for 2024/25. The Council faces difficult decisions to deliver on its ambitions for the people of Norfolk against a difficult economic climate and more than a decade of reduced funding.

The proposals fall within the council's Community and Environmental Services department, which includes Norfolk Libraries, Museums, Waste Management and the Norfolk Record Office.

The three proposals being launched today are:

Street lighting: To switch off some streetlights across Norfolk in areas where it is considered safe and appropriate to do so.

Norfolk Record Office (NRO): To introduce pre-booking of visits and change opening hours.

Recycling centres: To reduce opening hours at some recycling centres to deliver a more consistent approach, in line with neighbouring authorities.

Between them these proposals could save approximately £457,000 a year.

The council is consulting the public on these proposals from today, 15 February, to midnight on 22 March 2024. The consultation survey is available on the council's Citizen Space platform at: www.norfolk.gov.uk/savingsproposals

"We have been operating through a period of reductions to funding, compounded by rising demand and increasing costs to deliver services. We believe these proposals can help make the savings we need with minimum impact on our residents, but we want to hear your thoughts on whether these changes are right for Norfolk."

The proposals on streetlighting involve switching off 2% of streetlights across the county to save money and reduce carbon emissions. Norfolk County Council has identified 34 locations where the council plans to switch off some street lights. This represents 1.35% of the Council's target of 2%. Further locations will be identified at a later date.

Approximately 1,000 of the 54,000 street lights that the county council manages across the county would be switched off under these plans. It is expected that this could save up to £200,000 per year and cut carbon emissions annually by 76 tonnes, providing an environmental benefit and significantly contributing towards the council's Climate Strategy.

The proposal for introducing pre-booking and changing the opening hours of the Norfolk Record Office would extend the current limited Friday service to a Thursday with the same 10am to 4pm opening hours and maintains a full service on Wednesday and Wednesday from 9.30am until 5pm.

However, compressing the NRO's full searchroom service to two days runs the risk of excessive levels of demand in the searchroom. Therefore, the NRO is proposing to introduce a booking system on those days. People who turn up without

Sign

Date

ing will still be admitted, providing there is sufficient capacity, but cannot be guaranteed a place. People will be able to an appointment via email, over the phone or in person at the NRO. These changes could save a total of £57,000 in /25.

ly, proposals to reduce the opening hours at some recycling centres in Norfolk would see 13 recycling centres close on a nesday, in line with the centres in neighbouring Suffolk. The additional six recycling centres in Norfolk operate part and are already closed on Wednesdays. This proposal could save around £200,000 a year.

enges of Coastal Erosion and Flooding set for discussion by councillors

olk councillors are being invited to renew their call for a dedicated Minister for the Coast, as well as funding from central nment for flood defences for Norfolk.

olk County Council's Infrastructure and Development Select Committee will be considering a report on Coastal Erosion and Flooding in county at their meeting next Friday, forming an update to the previous examination of the issue by the council's Scrutiny Committee vember last year.

ere are parts of Norfolk where we can see our coast disappearing before our eyes: while we can't turn back tides or change the flow of North Sea, we can put in place sensible defences and work to lessen the impact of erosion on our communities.

is not a simple matter: it involves many partners, and requires fair and sustainable funding for sea defences. We need to keep illors and the public updated on what's being done, but also the reality that we need a clear and continuous commitment from central nment to make coastal issues a priority."

report recommends that councillors support the lobbying of central government for more funding for coastal erosion schemes, as well support the appointment of a Minister for the Coast to give coastal communities a champion sitting within government who can take a tic view of the challenges and opportunities that such communities face, especially coastal erosion and flooding.

ring a commitment to such an appointment would give confidence that coastal issues are recognised at the heart of government and solutions to the threats these communities face will be addressed.

report spells out the challenge posted by coastal erosion along Norfolk's 90 miles of coastline, including the predictions of possible evel rises of up to 1.15m by the end of the century. To compound the challenge, Norfolk has part of the fastest eroding coastline in h-West Europe.

out action, it's estimated that in North Norfolk alone approximately 1,030 residential and commercial properties could be lost to on by 2105.

Infrastructure and Development Select Committee meeting will be held at 10am on Friday 23 February, just over three weeks after eader of Norfolk County Council, Cllr Kay Mason Billig, visited Westminster to lay out the need for a new Minister for the Coast to

osting



Tell us about your composting experience! 🍏🍏🍏

Composting at home is a very environmentally friendly way to deal with our kitchen and garden waste and is one of Norfolk County Council's key waste reduction initiatives. We would like to find out about people's attitudes and experience of composting at home and it would be helpful if you could complete the following survey. https://orlo.uk/compost_DGJ4Z

Even if you have never composted in the past, we'd still love to hear from you!

The survey should take no more than five minutes to complete, thank you for your time.

Government to ban disposable vapes

Government [has announced](#) that disposable vapes are set to be banned as part of plans to tackle the rising number of young people g up vaping.

measure comes as part of the government's response to its consultation on smoking and vaping. Recent figures show the number of ren using vapes in the past 3 years has tripled. As well as benefitting children's health, the ban will have a positive impact on the onment, as 5 million disposable vapes, that are hard to recycle, are thrown away each year.

Sign

Date

reported to the People and Communities Select committee on 19 January, whilst supporting vaping as a tool to quit smoking, Norfolk County Council is already taking measures to help prevent non-smokers from taking up vaping and to prevent the illegal sale of vapes to children and young people. They have also recently developed a vaping toolkit to help schools implement a whole-school approach to addressing the increasing challenge around vaping.

Riparian rights

In the extent of the storms we will also have to look at the capacity for retaining water. We had started to do that last year by reminding people of their riparian rights in relation to ditches.

County Deal for Norfolk update

At the full council meeting on 12 December 2023, Councillors accepted a £600 million devolution deal for Norfolk. The deal will also mean that more decisions can be taken in Norfolk, for Norfolk.

The council voted to accept a county deal devolution agreement with the Government to transfer significant funding, powers and decisions to Norfolk.

Government funding will start transferring to Norfolk next summer if councillors vote in July 2024 to stage the first election for a county council in May 2025.

The full council agreed the following recommendations:

Council:

- Recognises the work carried out during 2023 to consult with the public, inform Members and prepare plans in relation to the 'in-principle' County Deal brought to Council in January this year.
- Commends the work undertaken by the Leader and Officers to secure additional benefits for the Norfolk County Deal and resolves that the Deal should be accepted.
- Agrees that the election for the Directly Elected Leader should be held alongside the county council elections in May 2025 to enable the widest possible engagement with the electorate.
- Agrees that the resolution adopting the new governance arrangements should be brought to the Full Council meeting on 23 July 2024 to facilitate that election date.

Still help



When the temperature dips it can put vulnerable people in your community at risk. Check in on older or vulnerable people living nearby to make sure they're ok.

<https://orlo.uk/lbZmb>

Schools, Every Child in Norfolk to Flourish

Schools are run by either a governing Body or an Academy Trust but there are some areas that are within NCC remit.

Schools must provide sufficient places for ages 4 to 16. We have just reviewed our School Sufficiency Plan. This is a very difficult task with an urban and rural mix and the key data and demographics. Pupil numbers are also on decline and have been since 2019.

Schools: Parental Choice.

Sign

Date

parents have a 1,2,3 preference choice but in the last intake some parents did not get any of their 3 choices. It has been agreed for 2023 that parents will be given 4 choices.

Photo ID - Voter authority certificate awareness update

May was the first time in England that voters were required to produce a valid photo ID or a voter authority certificate to be issued on ballot paper. The Electoral Commission found that awareness of the certificate stood at 57% in May 2023, and only 25,000 certificates were used as a form of ID on polling day.

The Government agrees that everything possible should be done to make everybody who is in a position to vote aware, first, of the need for identification, and, secondly, of the possibility of applying for a certificate if they do not have other forms of photographic identification. The Minister said he was focusing on how he could get the awareness figure closer to 80% - 90%. Will be an election this year!

National Vaccination Strategy

The Government, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Care, the UK Health Security Agency and other partners, has developed a strategic direction for the delivery of vaccination services, focussed on improving uptake and coverage of all vaccinations across the whole population whilst reducing disparities of uptake in under-served communities. To do so the [Vaccination Strategy](#), published on 13 December, aims to:

1. Simplify and streamline access to vaccinations, including extending online booking capability.

2. Improve access for people who are currently underserved by offering vaccination through community-based, targeted approaches.

3. Deliver vaccination through flexible, integrated, neighbourhood teams that can deliver other preventative interventions alongside vaccination.

4. The strategy proposes that Integrated Care Boards have the responsibility and flexibility to deliver these aims through local vaccination delivery networks that are tailored to the needs of local people.

DIY waste centres

Norfolk residents will be able to dispose of small amounts of DIY waste at Norfolk's Recycling Centres free of charge from 31 December following changes made by Norfolk County Council.

The new change applies to small-scale projects carried out by householders on their own home, allowing them to bring a maximum 100 litres (that fit into 2 x 50l bags) for free or one single item (maximum size of 200cm x 70cm x 75cm). Each household is allowed four free disposals with DIY waste every four weeks. Anything beyond this will still be charged at normal rates.

From 31 December, the Government has set out the limits to household DIY waste which can be taken free of charge, but our Pay As You Throw service will remain in place as a convenient way to get rid of larger amounts. It's important that people are encouraged to dispose of their waste responsibly.

In 2022/23 the County Council's Recycling Centres handled more than 60,000 tonnes of waste and 72% of this was diverted from landfill. We hope this change to legislation will be a further boost to householders to recycle as much as they can.

The change in policy follows Government abolishing charges for the disposal of limited amounts and types of DIY waste at recycling centres across the UK.

From 31 December, customers with DIY-type construction and demolition waste will continue to be directed to the 'Pay as you throw service' which is available at all centres.

Customers must continue to pay for DIY waste.

For more information visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/DIYwaste

or <https://twitter.com/i/status/1736703165016248352>

Adult Learning

Norfolk County Council's Adult Learning has been rated as 'Good' following their latest Ofsted inspection.

Sign

Date

inspection report praised the ambition of the service, which provides community-based and online learning for around 6,000 adults a week. The service achieved a 'Good' rating across all six areas that were inspected, alongside the overall 'Good' rating.

"We are proud of the positive impact that our courses have on the lives and careers of our learners. Adult Learning is an essential tool in building Norfolk's work force and provides a clear boost to our local economy."

"I was pleased to see that the inspectors recognised the high quality of teaching and the inclusive approach that Adult Learning offers. It is important that we support those who face barriers to education, such as mobility, social isolation and financial hardship so they can realise their potential."

The inspectors commented that learners are 'highly motivated' and committed to their studies. They praised the number of people who have a 'clear plan' for their future careers and that they want to improve their economic prospects.

In particular, inspectors highlighted the work with residents of retirement homes who have increased their confidence, self-care and independence after completing courses in basic cookery. They commented how, following the course, learners felt less isolated and 'excited to cook and eat their own meals'.

The report also recognised that the service has responded effectively to the growing demand for English for speakers of other languages (EFL) courses.

There was praise for the work with Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service apprentices. The inspectors saw how the course helps them to work safely while learning about the importance of health and nutrition. The report concluded that the 'apprenticeship is well matched to the needs of the fire service.'

This inspection result comes on the back of Norfolk County Council Adult Learning being named 'Further or Higher Education Provider of the Year' at this year's Norfolk Education Awards. This followed national recognition in 2021 where the service was named adult and community learning provider of the year at the TES Further Education Awards.

Norfolk County Council Adult Learning offers a wide range of courses for adults of all levels and interests. Whether you want to change your career, improve your skills, or pursue your passion.

traffic collisions

Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service is the first fire service to partner with a charity to help those affected by serious road traffic collisions.

Fire Officer, Ceri Sumner, has signed a 'Memorandum of Understanding' with the Road Victims Trust, so fire fighters at the scene of an accident can signpost people to get ongoing help from the charity.

The Road Victims Trust (RVT) works to help people impacted by grief or trauma following a road death, serious injury or life-changing event. It offers emotional and practical help, as well as a specialist counselling service to people across the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

The charity, which started offering its support services in this county last summer after receiving funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk, provides free and confidential support for as long as it is needed to those affected by serious road traffic collisions - including witnesses.

Andy Pinto, Group Manager - Prevention Lead at Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, said: "We have a shared goal with the Road Victims Trust of seeing a reduction in the number of fatal and life-changing collisions in Norfolk."

"We also want to provide the best possible support for those who have been involved in something so serious and heartbreaking. We are now carrying the details of the RVT on our fire engines and response vehicles so we can help people to get the support they need."

John Turner, Chief Executive of the Road Victims Trust, said: "I am so pleased we have formed this partnership with Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service and hope it leads to us working directly with other fire services in the country."

Sign

Date

offer specialist support to help rebuild victims lives after serious road traffic collisions and by working with the fire service, we can offer these important services to more people.”
In 2023, the charity supported 476 people who had been affected by fatal and life-changing road traffic collisions.

This partnership builds on Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service's continued work with other key agencies to help reduce the number and impact of serious and fatal collisions in the county.

Stratton bypass

Another key step forward in the Long Stratton bypass project has been achieved with the news today that Octavius Infrastructure Limited has been appointed to build the new route.

Graham Plant, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Transport, said: “This is another welcome milestone we’ve reached in a vital infrastructure project. The 3.9km road will not only solve the transport issues caused by the bottleneck on the A140 - which is a major local route - but also open-up improvements for cycling and walking in and around the town. Once in place the scheme will cut congestion, unlock economic growth, and improve journey times across the county.”

Following initial preparation works which will be taking place over the coming months, the target date for the main construction work to start on the bypass is Spring 2024. For more information visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/strattonbypass

Pharmacy First launched

Patients in England will now be able to get treatment for seven common conditions at high street pharmacies without needing to see a GP, as part of a major transformation in the way the NHS delivers care.

Trained pharmacists will be able to assess and treat patients for sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bite, impetigo, shingles, and uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women (under the age of 65) without the need for a GP appointment or prescription.

The NHS said that 90% of community chemists have registered to provide the new service and it will free up around 10 million GP appointments a year.

Patients can access the new service by walking straight into a chemist or being referred by NHS 111, urgent treatment centres, hospital emergency departments or their GP. Those who are not registered with a GP can still access the service.

The scheme is part of the NHS and government’s primary care access recovery plan.

There will be a national marketing campaign from mid-February 2024, which will encourage the public to access advice and treatment from community pharmacy services for common conditions.



This February our libraries across the county are hosting DigiFest, with free workshops for children and young people aged 0-14.

Get hands on with robots, learn coding skills, produce animated short films or create fabulous 3D designs. There is something to inspire everyone.

Look out for old favourites like Code-a-Pillar and Botley, along with brand-new sessions like Artie 3000, the robot that can draw, and Let's Go Code, a physical game that teaches you to think like a robot.

[DigiFest](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/digifest), which aims to inspire the next generation of coders and creators, is back for 2024!

DigiFest forms part of [Norfolk County Council's Digital Inclusion Strategy](#) and helps children and young people (CYP) with the use of creative digital technologies, aiming to inspire them to pursue a future career in a digital industry.

Services

Free wifi

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n rooms with a warm drink

Throughout February, there will be a huge variety of free events and workshops taking place across Norfolk's libraries for children and young people (CYP) aged four to 14. They are being encouraged to try their hand at stop-motion animation, learn basic coding skills with programmable robots, create with 3D pens and more.

In Norwich, Adult Learning will host 3D printing sessions, and the UEA School of Psychology will run a fun activity with their innovative eye-tracking technology. At the end of the month, local games professional Susi Bauer will draw Digifest to a close by delivering an engaging career talk for older children and young people at Millennium Library, covering jobs in the games industry.

Digital partner sessions have also been scheduled across the county, including Lego™ robotics sessions with [ICT Solutions](#), Norfolk's experts in introducing children to new technology.

Ensuring that everyone in Norfolk is digitally included is a top priority for the council. We know that as a rural county we need to work hard to connect people together, and young people joining in Digifest will help to encourage them into the vital digital jobs of the future."

Free workshops will run throughout the month with the aim of sparking interest in technology among Norfolk's youngest residents.

In addition to Digifest, Norfolk Libraries offer a whole host of digital initiatives for all ages, including:

• Digital apps, such as Press Reader, which allows readers to access digital versions of magazines and newspapers, and [Libby](#), which allows readers to borrow digital copies of books

• Digital Health Hubs which give people one-to-one support to get access to online health services

• National Databank, which provides adults in need with six-months of free data via a SIM card

• A team of Digital Champions who help people, usually one-to-one, to improve their computer skills

• Coding Clubs and Robotics Clubs

• Laptop to Loan, an initiative which allows over 18s with a full library membership to borrow a laptop for up to six weeks at a time

• Quiet and welcoming study spaces - including extended 'Open Library' access during unstaffed hours

• [Theory Test Pro](#) (free simulation of driving theory test including official practice questions, hazard perception videos and online version of the Highway code)

To explore events taking place across Norfolk's libraries throughout Digifest, visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/digifest

Alternatively, join your local library and explore everything they have to offer by visiting www.norfolk.gov.uk/jointhelibrary

Pass

From 1 February 2024 all Norfolk residents who hold a disabled concessionary travel pass will be eligible for free bus travel 24 hours a day seven days a week when travelling within the county.

This decision, which was published today by Norfolk County Council, means that more than 14,500 people across the county who hold a concessionary bus pass due to disability, and their eligible companions, will now be able to travel on any bus at any time free of charge across Norfolk.

"This ensures they have access to work, education and leisure and helps to combat the risks of social isolation which can be associated with having a disability. In addition, encouraging more use of public transport leads to a greener future and helps towards our ambitious net-zero targets."

Previously concessionary pass holders with a disability were only able to travel for free on buses off-peak (all day on Saturdays and Sundays but only from 09:30 Monday to Friday) except for those registered blind or visually impaired.

Providing free travel at all times is over and above the minimum requirement set by government and is something that a local authority can choose to do but doesn't have to do. The change was recommended following an updated equality impact assessment of the scheme which concluded that it is now unfair to offer a discretionary enhancement to just one group of disabled people (i.e. those who are blind or partially impaired).

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recommendation agreed by the individual cabinet member was to 'extend the concessionary travel discretion of free travel at all times to all eligible disabled passholders and eligible companions, from 1 February 2024.'

The cost of providing this enhancement is estimated at £50,000 which will be funded by the Council's ring-fenced public transport budget provided by the Department for Transport.

To explore events taking place across Norfolk's libraries throughout Digifest, visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/digifest

Alternatively, join your local library and explore everything they have to offer by visiting www.norfolk.gov.uk/jointhelibrary

Children and Young People: Post-16 Travel Scheme Consultation

Norfolk County Council has launched a public consultation as part of its annual review of its Post-16 Transport Policy Statement. The consultation focuses upon their [Post-16 Travel Scheme](#) that offers subsidised travel for eligible students aged between 16-18 years old, as well as 16-25 year olds with Special Education Needs and Disabilities, to get to a school sixth form, sixth form college or further education learning establishment.

The council spent £3.8m on its Post-16 Travel Scheme in 2022-23, providing travel assistance to 1,320 students across Norfolk. To reflect the current and forecasted level of inflation for the next year, they are considering increasing the parental contribution for the Post-16 Travel Scheme. The council usually increases the cost of the Post-16 Travel Scheme each year in-line with inflation.

In the consultation the council outlines two options for increasing parental contributions for post-16 travel. The 3% option is based on current inflation levels and the 6% option is based on the council's inflationary forecast for 2024-25. The 6% figure more likely represents the cost uplift that the council will face in the coming year.

The council does not have to provide free or subsidised post-16 travel assistance but do have to prepare and publish an annual transport policy statement, specifying arrangements for provision of transport or other assistance that the authority considers necessary to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training.

The Post-16 Transport Policy is reviewed annually to make sure it offers the best value for money and meets the needs of local children and young people, while remaining financially sustainable.

Findings from the consultation will be used as part of the evidence to inform a decision about the proposals. If approved, this change will be implemented from September 2024.

The consultation closes on 27 February 2024 and is available [here](#).

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- [Scam Alert - Fake parcel delivery text messages](#)
- [Scam Alert - Telephone cold calls claiming to be from banks](#)
- [Cold Calling Alert - Doorstep cold callers offering tree work](#)
- [Cold Calling Alert - Doorstep Cold Caller offering to undertake work on roofs](#)
- [Scam Alert - Telephone cold calls asking about internet strength](#)
- [Recall Alert - Next recalls their 'Next SP Parachute Cargo Trousers' with the item numbers 301712 \(Khaki\) and 318446 \(Stone\) due to a possible entrapment hazard](#)
- [Recall Alert - A recall has been issued for 'High Pressure Shower Head with Stop Button' sold via Temu as the product presents a serious risk of burns as it is unsafe for use with electric showers](#)
- [Scam Alert - Emails claiming to be from Disney+](#)
- [Scam Alert - Unknown charges on bank accounts](#)
- [Cold Calling Alert - Telephone cold calls regarding loft insulation](#)
- [Information Alert - Websites offering CSCS Cards](#)
- [Rogue Trader Alert - Doorstep cold callers claiming issues with properties' roof](#)
- [Recall Alert - TK Maxx recalls 'Cortex Beauty Hair Curler' sold in TK Maxx and Homesense stores and online between September and November 2023 due to a safety issue which may cause an electric shock](#)
- [Recall Alert - TK Maxx recalls 'Brookstone Beverage Warmer' sold in TK Maxx and Homesense stores and online between November and December 2023 due to a safety issue which presents a risk of electric shock and fire](#)

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